

## Message Text

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PAGE 01 ISLAMA 05288 310609Z POSS DUPE  
ACTION NEA-11

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01  
INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15  
ICA-11 HA-05 IO-13 EB-08 LAB-04 SIL-01 OMB-01  
/109 W

-----018841 311510Z /72

R 301103Z MAY 78  
FM AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7424  
INFO AMEMBASSY ANKARA  
AMEMBASSY COLOMBO  
AMEMBASSY DACCA  
AMEMBASSY KABUL  
AMCONSUL KARACHI  
AMCONSUL LAHORE POUCH  
AMEMBASSY LONDON  
AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI  
AMEMBASSY PARIS  
AMEMBASSY TEHRAN  
CINCPAC

C O N F I D E N T I A L ISLAMABAD 5288

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS  
TAGS: PINT, SHUM, ELAB, PK  
SUBJECT: AGREEMENT REACHED IN JOURNALISTS' STRIKE

REF: A) ISLAMABAD 5209, B) ISLAMABAD 5164, C) ISLAMABAD 5099

1. SUMMARY: AGREEMENT WAS REACHED MAY 29 BETWEEN REPRESENTATIVES  
OF THE PAKISTAN UNION OF JOURNALISTS (PUJ) AND THE MARTIAL LAW  
ADMINISTRATION (MLA) IN THE DISPUTE OVER THE CLOSURE OF THE  
LAHORE EDITION OF MUSAWAAT (REFS). THE MLA HAS AGREED TO ALLOW  
REOPENING OF THE PAPER UNDER ITS PRESENT OWNERSHIP, SO LONG AS  
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THE JOURNALISTS "KEEP IT RESPONSIBLE." THE MLA ALSO AGREED TO  
RELEASE THOSE STILL IN DETENTION OVER THE PROTEST DEMONSTRATIONS.  
ALTHOUGH REACTION TO THE SETTLEMENT FROM MUSAWAAT'S OWNERS AND  
THE MORE RADICAL ELEMENTS IN THE PRESS UNIONS IS NOT YET IN, THE  
MLA SEEMS TO HAVE SUCCEEDED IN SPLITTING THE JOURNALISTS,  
POSSIBLY WINNING ANOTHER BATTLE WITH THE PRESS, AND PERHAPS  
GETTING RID OF AN INCREASINGLY EMBARRASSING PROBLEM. END SUMMARY.

2. AGREEMENT WAS REACHED MAY 29 BETWEEN NEGOTIATORS REPRESENTING THE PAKISTAN UNION OF JOURNALISTS (PUJ) AND THE MARTIAL LAW ADMINISTRATION (MLA) IN THE MONTH-LONG DISPUTE OVER THE MLA'S CLOSURE OF THE LAHORE EDITION OF THE PRO-PAKISTAN PEOPLES PARTY (IXP) URDU DAILY MUSAWAAT. THE NEGOTIATORS HAD BEEN MEETING SINCE MAY 25 (REF B).

3. THE AGREEMENT AS PUBLISHED CALLS FOR THE GOVERNMENT TO ALLOW THE REOPENING OF THE LAHORE MUSAWAAT BY ITS PRESENT OWNERS. THE GOVERNMENT ALSO AGREED TO RELEASE ALL THOSE STILL UNDER DETENTION FOR THEIR PART IN THE PAST MONTH'S PROTEST DEMONSTRATIONS, ALTHOUGH NO MENTION HAS BEEN MADE SPECIFICALLY OF REMITTING SENTENCES OR PARDONING OFFENDERS. PRESS REPORTS MAY 30 THAT THE MLA IN LAHORE HAD UNSEALED MUSAWAAT'S OFFICES EVENING OF MAY 29.

4. FOR THEIR PART, THE PUJ NEGOTIATORS AGREED THAT WHILE THE PAPER WILL HAVE THE "FREEDOM TO PROPAGATE THE POLITICAL PROGRAM OF ITS OWN PERSUASION, IT WILL NOT MILITATE AGAINST THE IDEOLOGY, INTEGRITY, AND UNITY OF PAKISTAN." THE PUJ ALSO AGREED THAT MUSAWAAT SHOULD NOT ENGAGE IN "DISTORTION, FABRICATION, OR CONCOCTION." THE AGREEMENT STIPULATES THAT THE PRESS WORKERS ARE PRIMARILY RESPONSIBLE FOR VIGILANCE ON THIS AND THAT THE MLA "WILL PROVIDE ASSISTANCE AND BACKING" TO THE WORKERS IF MUSAWAAT'S MANAGEMENT TRIES TO BREAK THE AGREEMENT.  
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5. COMMENT: THE PUJ-MLA AGREEMENT MAY SIGNAL THE END OF THE CURRENT MUSAWAAT DISPUTE. THE MLA, FOLLOWING ITS PAST PATTERN OF POLITICAL MANEUVER, SEEMS TO HAVE SUCCESSFULLY SPLIT THE JOURNALISTS (WHO FROM THE BEGINNING WERE NEVER AGREED AMONG THEMSELVES ON THE PROTEST) ALONG CONSERVATIVE/RADICAL LINES. AFTER LOCKING UP AND/OR EXTERNING THE RADICALS, THE MLA THEN NEGOTIATED WITH THE CONSERVATIVES. WHETHER SUCH AN AGREEMENT WILL BE HONORED ON THE PRINTING PRESS MAY BE ANOTHER MATTER.

6. THE RADICAL JOURNALISTS, FROZEN OUT OF THE AGREEMENT, BUT PRESUMABLY TO BE RELEASED FROM MLA CUSTODY, MAY CHOOSE TO CONTINUE THEIR PROTEST AGAINST THE MLA BY VIOLATING THE AGREEMENT REACHED BY THEIR CONSERVATIVE COLLEAGUES. THEY CAN DO THIS SIMPLY BY MAKING MUSAWAAT'S FIRST FEW EDITIONS INTENTIONALLY INFLAMMATORY. PERHAPS SENSING THIS POSSIBILITY, THE MLA-PUJ AGREEMENT DOES NOT CALL FOR THE REHIRING OF ALL MUSAWAAT EMPLOYEES, AND THE MLA MAY HOPE THAT CONSERVATIVE ELEMENTS WILL CLOSE OUT THE OPTION OF A RADICAL MUSAWAAT RESURRECTED.  
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## Message Attributes

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